

Millersville at Fall Creek Valley
Village and Corridor Plan
Connectivity Work Group
June 20, 2011

Approximately nine people attended the Connectivity Work Group meeting at St. Matthews School.

Gina Bush Hayes welcomed the attendees and summarized the proceedings of the previous meeting.

Ms. Hayes introduced Anna Tyszkiewicz, a planner with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Ms. Tyszkiewicz spoke on the Northeast corridor of the Indy Connect Plan and on bus corridors serving the study area.

The Northeast Corridor is a proposed mass transit line connecting downtown Indianapolis with destinations in northeastern Indianapolis and extending north to the town of Fishers. The MPO is currently working on an Alternatives Analysis and an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed line. These studies are both required to qualify for federal funding. The Alternatives Analysis compares all the available mass transit technologies so that a well-informed choice may be made among them. Ms. Tyszkiewicz was asked about light-rail versus commuter rail. She noted that if the northeast corridor was to become a light-rail line it would be the longest in the nation and that, at the length of the northeast corridor, commuter rail is typically more cost effective to operate.

The Alternatives Analysis and the Environmental Impact Statement are expected to be complete in late 2012. After their completion, the next step is to prepare an application for federal funds.

Station stops along the proposed transit route are still being evaluated.

Ms. Tyszkiewicz then presented a map of existing bus routes. She noted that bus routes run along some of the streets that border the study area, but no routes run into or through the study area. Among the reasons for this are the low population density of much of the study area, the lack of major employment centers in the study area, low capacity of 56th Street as it nears Keystone Avenue to the west and safety issues associated with the narrow, downhill curves on Kessler Boulevard just west of Binford Boulevard.

The construction of the Northeast Corridor transit line and the potential of a station in proximity to the study area would likely result in a heightened need for a bus line through the study area.

Ms. Tyszkiewicz was asked who should be contacted at IndyGo to advocate for bus routes in the study area. She gave the names of Samantha Cross and Annette Darrow.

Ms. Hayes apologized for being unable to secure a representative of the Department of Public Works to speak to the group. However a DPW representative did provide Ms. Hayes with comments on street and traffic issues that had previous been raised.

DPW response to questions:

- High traffic volume and speed, what traffic calming methods does DPW use.

Depending on the classification of the roadway, DPW has the ability to utilize a number of different alternatives to help calm traffic. These traffic calming options may include bump outs, on street parking, speed humps, chicanes, lane narrowing, etc...Once specific street segments have been identified, DPW can take a look at what options are feasible. I have also attached a copy of our traffic calming guidelines that describe our process.

- The curve on Kessler Boulevard east of Binford Boulevard is narrow and dangerous, has this project been scheduled.

DPW has received a number of requests regarding the curve in question. City County Councilor Scales has most recently expressed concerns with this section of roadway. The RebuildIndy team is currently taking a look at the location and gathering data to determine what potential options there are for improvement. A safety audit is planned that will review reported crashes and various funding options along this corridor. It is our hope that Highway Safety Improvement Program funds could be used to help make this corridor safer. DPW will keep planning up-to-date on our progress.

- Millersville Road north of Fall Creek is in need of repair.

The RebuildIndy team will send someone out to investigate the condition of Millersville Road (Dequincy to Emerson) to determine condition. This condition assessment will help prioritize this location for a potential improvement. DPW will keep planning up-to-date on our progress and findings.

- Fall Creek North Pkwy from Bindford to 46th needs to be resurfaced.

The section of roadway has already been identified as a need in DPW's inventory. It however has not been assigned to a specific contract for construction. As funding becomes available the location will be addressed.

- Is there even a chance of converting major intersections to roundabouts where appropriate.

Roundabouts are options, however conversions are not planned unless there are operational issues that could be solved by the installation of roundabouts. The biggest challenge with fitting roundabouts in an existing developed footprint is the additional ROW that is typically needed to accommodate the roundabout. Many times, the right of way is already tight and installing roundabouts near development causes such an impact to the existing development that it has to be relocated. If there are specific intersections that are of concern, DPW could take a look at those and report back our findings.

- Road Diet on 56th west of Emerson to the interstate or to add a center left turn lane.

Any change in lane configuration would require further study to determine potential impacts and coordination with the MPO and DMD due to the potential loss of traffic lanes. Traffic volumes may be too heavy through this section to be able to support the reduction in the number of through lanes. Further analysis and vetting through the public would be necessary.

Ms. Hayes then led the group through a discussion of traffic calming and road diets. She showed examples of a wide range of traffic calming options and asked the participants which areas were good candidates for traffic calming or road diets. Emerson Avenue south of Fall Creek and 56th Street east of Fall Creek were most commonly suggested.

The two forms of traffic calming that seemed to garner the most interest were textured pavement at crosswalks and landscaped medians. Medians with public art were suggested as a possible alternative to landscaped medians.

Ms. Hayes concluded the meeting by relating the next steps in the committee process. Ms. Hayes will use the results of the committee's meetings to develop a draft report. The draft report will be distributed to meeting participants prior to the next meeting. At the next meeting, which will likely occur in August, participants will be asked to provide comments on the draft report and prioritize the projects and programs recommended in the report.